

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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R 211452Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1318

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP UR

SUBJ: STATUS OF RECREATIONAL FACILITY REQUESTS

REF: A. STATE 160671 B. MOSCOW 7285

1. FOLLOWING IS CHECKLIST OF EMBASSY'S REQUESTS AND NEEDS FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

2. LACK OF ADEQUATE PLAYGROUND AREA FOR CHILDREN RESIDENT IN CHANCERY CONTINUES TO BE MAIN PROBLEM BOTH FROM SAFETY AND MORALE STANDPOINT, AND ACCESS TO PLOT OF LAND BEHIND EMBASSY OR TO KONYUSHKOVSKAYA BUILDING SITE REMAINS BEST SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM. LAST WORD FROM UPDK ON THIS ISSUE WAS LETTER DATED JUNE 19 FROM DIRECTOR IVANOV REFUSING SUCH ACCESS. TEXT OF LETTER WAS TRANSMITTED TO DEPARTMENT REFTEL B. WE WILL AGAIN ADDRESS MATTER HERE AT LEVEL ABOVE UPDK, AND SUGGEST THAT DEPARTMENT AGAIN RAISE IT WITH SOVIET EMBASSY.

3. MEANWHILE, PLAYGROUND SITUATIONS COULD BE IMPROVE SLIGHTLY IF WE ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL SPACE NEAR EMBASSY TO WHICH CAR POOL COULD BE MOVED DURING AT LEAST DAYLIGHT HOURS, ALLOWING CHILDREN FULLER USE OF REAR COURTYARD WITHOUT HAVING TO DODGE OFFICIAL SEDANS AND TRUCKS AND FALLING OBJECTS DURING REPAIR OF FACADE. DURING NEGOTIATIONS ON COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE EMBASSY OBTAINED COMMITMENT FROM UPDK TO INTERCEDE WITH MOSSOVIET TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY VACANT LOT ON DEVYATINSKIY PEREULOK. LOT COULD BE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE, THOUGH DURING NEGOTIATIONS EMBASSY MAINTAINED THAT LOT WOULD BE PARKING SPACE FOR COMMERCIAL OFFICE.

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EMBASSY SUSPECTS, HOWEVER, THAT ADDITIONAL PRESSURE WILL HAVE TO

BE APPLIED BEFORE LOT IS OURS.

4. QUESTION OF BOATING FACILITIES IN MOSCOW AREA REMAINS UNRESOLVED. EMBASSY STAFF MEMBER WETHERBEE HAS JUST RECEIVED SMALL INFLATABLE RUBBER BOAT WITH MOTOR DISCUSSED IN BUCHANAN LETTER OF MARCH 7 AND SCANLAN REPLY OF MARCH 15, AND INTENDS TO TRY IT OUT IN PRIGOVSKOYE RESERVOIR IN NEAR FUTURE. ANOTHER EMBOFF HAS ALREADY USED SUCH BOAT (MINUS MOTOR) THERE. SINCE THIS IS INSIDE 40 KILOMETER ZONE, HOWEVER, IT STILL CONSTITUTES NO REALY TEST OF SOVIET INTENTIONS ON THE QUESTION OF GIVING US BOATING RIGHTS OUTSIDE THE NOTE-FREE TRAVEL ZONE.

5. CAVALIER TREATMENT BY UPDK OF EMBASSY EFFORTS TO OBTAIN USE OF SWIMMING POOLS, TENNIS COURTS, ETC., CONTINUES, AS EVIDENCED BY EMBASSY'S NOTE OF AUGUST 6 (POUCHED TO EUR/EX AND EUR/SOV) CONCERNING DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY CHILDREN'S SUMMER PROGRAM GROUP IN ATTEMPTING TO MAKE USE OF SWIMMING POOL. EMBASSY PLANS IN NEAR FUTURE TO APPROACH UPDK OF USE OF BASKETBALL COURT FOR COMING SEASON, AND IS BRACING ITSELF FOR USUAL HASSLE AND EXPECTED PRICE INCREASE (LAST YEAR FEE AT \$13.00 PER HOURS; THIS YEAR, IF OTHER PRICE INCREASES ARE ANY INDICATION, CHARGE WILL BE AROUND \$20.00).

6. DOWNHILL SKIING FACILITIES IN IMMEDIATE AREA OF MOSCOW ARE IN CLOSED ZONE (TURIST AND NEAR ZVENOGOROD), AND PROTOCOL WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO REFUSE PERMISSION TO USE THEM. EMBASSY FEELS THAT UPHILL EFFORT SHOULD NEVERTHELESS BE MADE, AND PLANS SUBMIT NOTE IN NEAR FUTURE REPEATING REQUEST THAT IT BE GRANTED ACCESS TO AND USE OF THESE SKI RUNS.
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